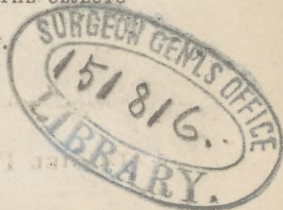


1

CONSTITUTION
OF THE
AMERICAN
PHYSIOLOGICAL SOCIETY:
WITH A
CATALOGUE
OF ITS
MEMBERS AND OFFICERS.

SUMMARY EXPLANATION OF THE OBJECTS

OF THE SOCIETY.



BOSTON:
MARSH, CAPEN & LYON.
1837.

PRINTED BY WM. A. HALL & Co.



AMERICAN PHYSIOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

THE present is an era of associated action. Men are no longer willing to labor always, in solitude ; they have acquired the art of combining their strength. Voluntary associations for the accomplishment of moral, intellectual and social purposes, have become quite the order of the day. Probably, none of us shall, however, regret that it is so. Our greatest anxiety on the subject should be to have their efforts wisely directed, and to wise ends.

In presenting their claims to the public, every association of individuals should make a faithful exposition of their views and objects. This the American Physiological Society now propose to do. It is due, not only to the public, but to themselves.

Physiology, or the Science of Life, has, by the mass of mankind, been hitherto but little studied. Even a knowledge of *Human* Physiology—the Science of *Human* Life—has been principally confined to the members of a single profession. And if we cannot justly say that medical men have intentionally

monopolized this species of knowledge, is it not most true that they have taken very little pains to diffuse it? When, and where, and by whom, during the last three thousand years, (or, at least, until within a very short time past,) has a knowledge even of the *theory* of Physiology been insisted on, as important, out of the pale of the medical profession?

We mean no reproach by these remarks—we suppose it has been thought that physiological knowledge could be of little service to the people at large. It has, probably, been regarded as beyond their means and opportunities. The maxim that “a little knowledge is a dangerous thing” has been deemed peculiarly applicable here. And, in so far as a partial or merely theoretical knowledge is concerned, this is, undoubtedly, true.

But it is not such a knowledge as this, that the American Physiological Society propose to acquire, or diffuse. They have in view, rather, the acquisition and diffusion of such plain and practical information, respecting the constitutional laws, relations, uses and abuses of the “house” the soul “lives in,” and of the various offices or functions of all the parts which go to make up this fearful and wonderful whole, as may tend to promote, not only their own health and longevity, but the health and longevity of the whole human family. They would, indeed, do more than this. Assured that honorable, useful, and happy age does not always consist in ‘multitude of years,’ they would

not only be a means, by their efforts, of increasing the average duration of human life, but of securing its highest comfort and happiness, in each of its several stages, between the cradle and the grave.

A knowledge of human Physiology, which shall tend to such a result, they believe to be accessible, in a community like our own, to every citizen. They do not believe that the Great Creator has united the human soul, for a term of fifty or a hundred years, to a habitation which is acknowledged on all hands to be fearfully and wonderfully wrought, and yet shrouded it in mystery, or hid its structure and laws wholly from common observation. They believe it to be not only the privilege, but the duty of every person, of good common sense, to make it a subject of daily study.

It is quite obvious—at least to us—that every person should know the constitution of the atmosphere in which he moves and breathes, as well as the structure and laws of the lungs and skin—the organs more immediately affected by it. According to the best estimates, a number of the inhabitants of our globe, about equal to the population of the city of Boston, dies every day ; or a number equal to the population of the commonwealth of Massachusetts every week ; or a number equal to half the population of the whole United States, every month ; and when we consider how large a proportion of the diseases of every climate and season—but especially of our own climate,

and the present season—are caused or aggravated by taking cold, is it unreasonable to suppose that about half of this mighty congregation are hurried to the tomb prematurely, in consequence of ignorance or disobedience of the organic laws of those portions of the human system ?

Inseparable from this, and of almost equal importance, in the same point of view, is a knowledge of the heart, arteries, and veins—the circulation of the blood—the change which the blood undergoes in passing through the lungs every four minutes—and by what circumstances and habits, in regard to temperature, employment, dress, food, &c. that change is impeded, and disease produced.

Every person, who feels, smells, tastes, hears or sees, should know the constitution and structure of the organs by whose instrumentality these surprising effects are produced. The study of these “doors,” by which knowledge is conveyed to the human soul, will naturally lead to the study of the brain and nervous system, and the constitution, laws and relations of this wonderful portion of the human machinery.

The study of the moving powers of the human body—the bones, muscles, tendons, &c.—will lead us to the laws which prevail in the animal economy, in relation to exercise. This department of Physiology will embrace a knowledge of the nature and tendency of the various physical habits—among which are the employments, occupations, professions

and recreations—of mankind. It will, also, in conjunction with a knowledge of the other departments of natural science, suggest to us which are more healthy, and which less so; as well as which of them tend, under the most favorable circumstances, to lay the foundations of future disease. And if it be true, as is no doubt the fact, that some employments and recreations, naturally healthy, become injurious by excess, Physiology teaches us how to draw the line between the appropriate use of them and their abuse.

The study of the structure and functions of the skin, aside from its connection with the lungs, may lead us to the obvious necessity of paying a due regard to cleanliness, by frequent local and general bathing. When we understand well this subject, we shall no longer wonder at the general prevalence of colds, consumptions, fevers, and bowel complaints; nor even at the existence of cholera. The wonder will be, rather, that so many of us escape disease, and that any of us attain to old age.

We shall, also, be led, in connection with this department of Physiology, to investigate the nature and character of clothing, and of all other artificial means of increasing or preserving human temperature—and of those abuses, in this department, which lead to disease.

In regard to the digestive system and digestion, Physiology is of immense importance. The complaint has long been, that, in regard to dietetic rules,

“doctors disagree.” But, whatever ground may exist for this complaint, it cannot be so well preferred against Physiology. Her language, when her voice is distinctly heard, is one and the same; and her rules, many of them, as fixed as those of the mathematics. The digestive apparatus, in its broadest sense, embraces the teeth, the salivary glands, the stomach, the liver, the pancreas and the intestines. Concerning the nature and character and relations of these, and the character and use of the saliva, the gastric juice, the bile, as well as the products of digestion—chyme, chyle, and blood—Physiology gives us the most full and complete instruction. It points out, also, the relation which subsists between the various kinds of food, drink and medicine in common and daily use among mankind, and this extensive digestive apparatus; and enables us to determine, in no measured degree, what quantity, quality, &c. of food and drink are best adapted to sustain health, and prolong life; and which of them—and under what circumstances—tend, directly or indirectly, to produce disease.

It is, indeed, a prominent object of this Association to study the dietetic nature and character of man, and to observe the changes induced on him by various articles of food and modes of cookery. The air we breathe, the sounds we hear, the odors we inhale, and the objects we see, are not always wholly within our control, though we may, indeed, do much in the

appropriate selection of even some of these. We may, to a very great extent, avoid breathing impure air, in our dwellings, our school-houses, our shops, our factories, and our churches, and thus, as has been already suggested, escape no small portion of the diseases which afflict and scourge our erring race. But food and drink do not so easily elude our grasp. Here we can select—choose or refuse—especially in a land of abundance, like this, to an almost unlimited extent.

The study of our relation to our mother earth must not be overlooked or forgotten by this association. Nor will such a result be likely to happen when it is considered how large a proportion of the best food for man—we mean the farinaceous vegetables—are the direct products of this bountiful foster-parent. A thorough knowledge of the dietetic character of our race will almost inevitably lead to an investigation of the present state of agricultural science. The farmer who has but just imbibed a taste for Physiology will probably be surprised at the mass of ignorance and error which prevails in this ancient, honorable, indispensable, and fundamental employment ; and at the tendency of many of those errors to destroy human health and happiness, and shorten the duration of human life. He will, perhaps, be ultimately led to see that a thorough reformation of society, based on the deep and broad principles of physiological science, will require a radical reformation in the whole department of agriculture and horticulture.

It is not our intention to interfere at all—in our efforts—with the duties, or encroach upon the province of the physician ; nay, we even hope to aid him greatly in the discharge of his weighty trust. Too long have our race been sufferers—and that, too, in no stinted degree—from the evils of quackery, in her many-headed forms. Too often have the prescriptions of judicious physicians been made in vain. But why all this ? Simply, or at least chiefly, because the community in general, and nurses in particular, are almost wholly ignorant of the science and laws of human life. Impart these, and you not only prevent disease directly, and destroy the very ignorance in which quackery loves to revel, but you raise up, at the same time, a generation better prepared to nurse the sick when such services are demanded. In this, and in a thousand other ways, we second, instead of discouraging and defeating, the best efforts of the regular bred physician.

In one respect will the members of this Association be likely to study Physiology in a manner somewhat different from that of the medical man. The latter studies it to enable him to cure disease ; to patch up, perhaps at great expense and hazard to the vital powers, and of health and life, an already tottering and wretched system ; while we, on the contrary, have it for our object to prevent those evils which it costs so much effort and time and money to eradicate. “ Prevention is better than cure,” is our

favorite motto, and we would gladly inscribe it, in large letters, on the door-posts and gates of every dwelling and every school-house of our wide-spread land. How many hospitals, public and private—how many moral and physical lazarettoes, might thus be spared, while the money and effort that now sustains them, might be turned into another channel ! Nay, more, much more ; how many of our race might thus, under God, be snatched from all the usual horrors of temporal and spiritual destruction !

One immediate object of this Association, prior to any considerable action, will be to get acquainted with each other, and with each other's condition, views, &c. One means of accomplishing this, as well as of eliciting much valuable information, will be to bring together and impart, at our monthly meetings, such facts in relation to our own obedience and disobedience to the laws of life, and the consequences, immediate or remote, as may be within our recollection ; also to report similar facts in the experience and history of those around us. We shall thus be enabled to shed light on one another's path, and prepared to reflect it on our fellow-men. There will probably be few, if any, members of the Association, who will not have it in their power to communicate, either verbally or in writing, many facts, which will be at once interesting, instructive, and important.

Another leading object of the Association will be to procure lecturers on the Science of Human Life, at least during some portion of each year, if possible. It will also be a desirable object to encourage the formation of auxiliary societies in all parts of the Union, either through the efforts of the Corresponding Secretary, or of agents or lecturers appointed specially for that purpose. Lastly, we hope to be able to aid each other, and those around us, by publishing, or encouraging the publication of suitable books, tracts, or periodicals.

In short, we associate for the purpose of acquiring and diffusing, to the full extent of our means and circumstances, that practical knowledge of the science of human life, which, we believe, will make us better parents, better teachers, better merchants, better mechanics, better manufacturers, better farmers, and, in every respect, better citizens. We verily believe, that there is no useful occupation or profession, which might not be rendered more useful and far more agreeable, by a knowledge of Physiology; that a mechanic, who is versed in the science, may even make a better coat or boot than he could in other circumstances. But to no individuals, after all, is this subject of more immediate importance than to mothers and housewives. In the education of a household, it is indispensable; and cannot be useless in the preparation of our food, especially bread, "the staff of life." It is in this view,

that the subjoined Constitution of our Society makes provision for the admission of female members.

In conclusion ; we have not thus associated for the acquisition and diffusion of physiological knowledge, without first sitting down and counting the cost. We are aware of difficulties ; but we steadfastly believe they can be overcome. The same spirit and zeal which once led our citizens to pledge "their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor," should lead us, on this occasion, and, in the hope of contributing to produce a revolution in society of at least equal magnitude, to cherish the same devotion to our object, and the same resolution to make every needful sacrifice.

CONSTITUTION OF THE SOCIETY.

WHEREAS a number of individuals of Boston and its vicinity, who had paid some attention to that part of Human Physiology which teaches the influence of temperature, air, cleanliness, exercise, sleep, food, drink, medicine, &c., on human health and longevity, were desirous of uniting their efforts for the purpose of prosecuting still further the study of this most useful science,—several meetings were recently held at Amory Hall, at one of which, namely, on the 11th of February, 1837, an Association was organized, which adopted the following

CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE I.

This Association shall be called the *American Physiological Society*.

ARTICLE II.

The object of this Society shall be to acquire and diffuse a knowledge of the laws of life, and of the means of promoting human health and longevity.

ARTICLE III.

The terms of membership shall be the payment of one dollar annually, or fifteen dollars to constitute a life member, for gentlemen ; and fifty cents annually, or seven dollars and fifty cents to constitute a life member for ladies ; and the signing of the Constitution.

ARTICLE IV.

The officers of the Society shall be a President, three Vice-Presidents, a Recording Secretary, a Corresponding Secretary, a Treasurer, and an Executive Committee, consisting of six members ; the whole to be chosen by ballot of the Society at their annual meeting. These officers, thus appointed, shall constitute the Council of the Society ; any five of whom may form a quorum for the transaction of business. Any vacancy occurring in the officers of the Society, may be filled at the next regular meeting.

ARTICLE V.

The regular meetings of the Society shall be held at the upper Amory Hall, on the first Wednesday of each month ; but special meetings may be called at the discretion of the Council, on the written application of any five members of the Society. The annual meeting shall be held on the Thursday next following the last Wednesday of May, in each year.

ARTICLE VI.

The President shall preside in all meetings of the Society ; or, if absent, his place shall be filled by a Vice-President, or by a President *pro tem*.

The Recording Secretary shall notify all meetings of the Society, and keep a faithful record of the proceedings of the same, as well as those of the Council.

The Corresponding Secretary shall be the organ of communication with other societies and individuals.

The Treasurer shall collect and receive all moneys of the Society, and shall make a detailed report of the state of the treasury, semi-annually, and a special report at the written request of the Council.

ARTICLE VII.

The Council shall have power to direct in regard to all the concerns and proceedings of the Society, not otherwise provided for by this Constitution ; and to propose such by-laws as they may, from time to time, deem expedient. They shall also make a full report to the Society, at each annual meeting.

ARTICLE VIII.

This Constitution may be amended at any regular meeting of the Society, by the votes of two thirds of the members present ; the said amendment having been proposed at the previous regular meeting.

NAMES OF MEMBERS.

Levi Abell
Wm. A. Alcott
Sidney Allen
Silas Allen, jun.
Justin Andrews
John Augustus
Charles W. Ayres

Abel Babcock
William Bailey
Silas P. Barnes
Frederick Beck
F. A. Benson
John Benson
C. H. H. Billings
Henry Blodgett
Allen Brackett
Jesse Bradshaw
George A. Brewer
E. S. Brigham
Edwin Brown
David Brown
Josiah Bumstead

Abner K. Campbell
David Campbell

Moses D. Campbell
William Carlton
Alvan Clark
Francis Clark
Isaac Clark
William Clark
John Codman
Nathaniel Cotton
Ira Crawford
Rufus K. Cummings
Moses Curtis

Albert P. Damon
David Davis
Horatio Davis
Nathaniel L. Dayton
Aaron Dexter
Thomas D. Derwood
Dexter Dickinson
John Dickinson
Prescott Dickinson
Joshua Dodge

Ephraim W. Edmands
George Edwards
George Everett

A. B. Fairbanks
Dwight F. Faulkner
Warren Fisher
Frederic Folsom

Edward Gilson
Nathaniel Gilson
Roswell Goss
Benjamin T. Gould
John Gulliver

John Hawkes
Henry H. Haynes
Joseph K. Hayes
J. B. Holman
Benjamin Hooper
James Hill, jun.
Wm. H. Hill
John Hunt
Reuben Hunting

Aaron Jones
William Jones

David Keith
J. G. Kellogg
John Kilton

James Lincoln
Samuel Lovejoy
John Livermore

Snow Magoun
Bela Marsh
Charles McIntier

S. G. Melding
Moses Mellen

S. A. Newell
Rapha H. Nevers
H. Niebuhr
G. H. Niebuhr
Julius A. Noble
Benjamin F. Nutting

Dewitt C. Peabody
Henry Peeler
Charles H. Perry
Nathaniel Perry
Roswell Plummer
Joseph K. P. Porter
Daniel Prescott
Lorenzo Prouty
Edward C. Purdy

George R. Rae
Luther Rand
True Rand
George Revere
Prescott Rice
Stephen Ridgley
Matthew Roffe
Richard Roberts
Moses B. Russell

Henry Safford
John Sawyer
Willard Sears
Edwin Shepard
S. G. Shipley

Joseph R. Simonds
John S. Sleeper

George N. Thompson
Joseph Thurston
George Titcomb

James Waldock
Nathan Walker

Charles Warren
Franklin O. Welch
Nathaniel Wells
J. B. Wetherbee
B. Willis
Isaiah T. Williams
Francis B. Winter
Charles G. Winn
Warren White

Mrs. Silas Allen, jun.
Mrs. Sidney Allen
Mrs. Justin Andrews
Mrs. Wm. A. Alcott
Mrs. George A. Brewer
Mrs. Allen Brackett
Mrs. David Campbell
Mrs. John Codman
Miss Hannah Eliza Clark
Mrs. Ira Crawford
Mrs. Prescott Dickinson
Miss Elizabeth Gale
Mrs. John Hawkes
Mrs. Sarah Hunting
Miss Sarah Hilton
Mrs. James Hill, jun.
Miss Mary Johnson
Mrs. John Kilton
Miss Eliza Lamprey
Miss Clarissa Leavitt
Miss Maria Lincoln

Mrs. Bela Marsh
Mrs. Moses Mellen
Mrs. Julius A. Noble
Miss Eliza Parker
Miss Lucy Parker
Mrs. Nathaniel Perry
Miss Abigail C. Pratt
Miss Lucy Pratt
Mrs. Edward C. Purdy
Mrs. Mary Randall
Miss Maria C. Ray,
Miss Abby J. Remick
Mrs. Matthew Roffe
Miss Martha Rogers
Miss Mary Sanderson
Miss Ann R. Smith
Mrs. George Titcomb
Mrs. B. Willis.
Miss Ann Wilson
Mrs. Warren White

OFFICERS.

WILLIAM A. ALCOTT, *President.*

JOHN BENSON,
MOSES MELLEN,
JOHN GULLIVER, } *Vice-Presidents.*

BELA MARSH,
WILLARD SEARS,
EDWIN BROWN,
JULIUS A. NOBLE,
DAVID KEITH,
JOSEPH THURSTON, } *Executive Committee.*

JOHN KILTON, *Recording Secretary.*

DAVID CAMPBELL, *Corresponding Secretary.*

NATHANIEL PERRY, *Treasurer.*